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1	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO				
2	WESTERN DIVISION				
3	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,		)	Docket No. 3:06-CR-719	
4	Plaintiffs,		)	Toledo, Ohio	
5	v.		)	APRIL 3, 2008	
6	MOHAMMED AMAWI, ET AL.,		)		
7	Defendants.		)		
8			_		
9	TRANSCRIPT OF PRETRIAL CONFERENCE, VOLUME 21				
10	BEFORE THE HONORABLE JAMES G. CARR UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE				
11					
12	APPEARANCES:				
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                            (419) 260-5259
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     Proceedings recorded by mechanical stenography, transcript
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     produced by notereading.
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THE COURT: Do you people have -- what form do
 1
 2
     you have recordings, or format?
 3
               MR. BOSS: I think -- I think that they mirror
 4
     what the government is doing, frankly.
 5
               THE COURT: But I meant the government -- where
 6
     are they?
 7
               MR. HARTMAN: They were originally produced to us
 8
     on CD that are in my office.
 9
               MR. BOSS: We do have those.
               THE COURT: Yeah, yeah, but they're simply all of
10
11
     them. Do you have an index to this CD?
               MR. HARTMAN: I have them by the 1D number that
12
13
     they provided.
14
               THE COURT: Can you skip to the particular
15
    number?
16
              MR. HARTMAN: No, not within a recording, I
17
     cannot skip to the parts that they want to play. I can't
18
    do that.
19
              MR. BOSS: They were provided to us in media
20
    player format so it just starts and then runs.
21
               MR. SOFER: We have the same thing, Judge, the
22
    problem with all of that is just not --
23
               THE COURT: Sure. You've got a jumble --
     everybody can sit down by the way. You don't need to stand
24
25
     up.
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MR. SOFER: We'd be very concerned about how the
 1
 2
     presentation of that would go both for legal reasons and
 3
     the ability for everyone to hear it.
 4
               MR. BOSS: Would you still like me to call the
 5
     tech people or put that on hold?
 6
               THE COURT: Well, what we would probably need
 7
     would be two screens like that, one for the jury and one
 8
     for parties, and --
 9
               MR. SOFER: Judge, again, those two screens --
10
     all they're going to end up, unless we have the audio
11
     system up.
12
               THE COURT: Of course. Well, can't -- I mean,
13
     can't we hear -- we could at least find out whether or
14
    not --
15
               MR. SOFER: We could try it.
16
               THE COURT:
                          Yeah, say to them this is what we
17
    have. Do you have a means of not just projecting but of
18
    broadcasting this?
19
               MR. BOSS: Judge, pardon me, I'm sorry.
20
               THE COURT: Go ahead.
21
               MR. BOSS: Part of the problem that the improved
22
     audio system cured was the --
23
               THE COURT: You have that in quotes, improved,
24
     closed quotes?
25
               MR. BOSS: When it works, it's certainly --
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Quote, audio, closed quote, system, 1 THE COURT: closed quote. 2 3 MR. BOSS: It cured the old acoustics in this 4 courtroom. And when playing these audio tapes without the 5 advantage of having the head phones, they are not 6 discernible. 7 THE COURT: Yeah, I notice. Okay. That's fine. 8 I've learned that. I was a little slow putting the phones 9 on. 10 It's in both of our interest to have MR. BOSS: 11 the head phones. 12 MR. SOFER: They sound better, I have to tell you 13 in our office many times just a regular PC, counsel just 14 said the same thing. The problem we've had over and over 15 again is actually not -- we can play them in our offices 16 and they sound great. For whatever reason, the interface 17 with The Court system has always been problematic. I think 18 the problem we've got to getting the sound okay were these 19 head phones. The problem is we put those little tiny 20 speakers that we use to define, say, what was in this 21 courtroom it just doesn't work. 22 MR. HERDMAN: The audio may --There's only one court reporter so. 23 THE COURT: 24 MR. HERDMAN: The audio actually may be working 25 if you can --

1 THE COURT: I can't hear you. 2 MR. HERDMAN: The audio may actually be working. 3 We're trying to figure out if it's working or not through 4 the headphones. 5 MS. FOLEY: The audio should be working, Judge. 6 THE COURT: Let me ask you this, are there 7 transcripts written, you know, that we can print if we take 8 an hour to print? 9 MR. SOFER: Yes and no. There are -- there are 10 written transcripts. We have them here. The issue with 11 that, Judge, is that the -- what we've done and made clear 12 to the jury and everybody else is we've taken the segments 13 out so that we don't have to play a three-hour-long 14 transcript to get to the part that matters. If -- to take 15 out what we've done in order to highlight it is literally 16 put it in yellow, that's how it appears in the transcripts. 17 THE COURT: Time out. Until we get the new 18 improved audio system, that's what we would do with the old 19 school sets or whatever they call them, the body wires, 20 everybody would get a transcript and they would follow 21 along. 22 MR. SOFER: Absolutely. 23 THE COURT: And how long would it take to get at 24 least a half day's worth of transcripts printed and cut and 25 pasted and printed off for jurors, and why don't we do

that? 1 2 MR. SOFER: What I was going to get to is if you 3 want -- we have to cut out the yellow, meaning there will 4 be no other part of the transcript available and that would 5 be --6 THE COURT: In the old day we didn't have yellow. 7 We didn't even have highlights. 8 MR. SOFER: I don't know. I can talk to my 9 colleagues, I don't think it would take that long. 10 THE COURT: Why don't we do that. Why don't we 11 at least head in that direction, get enough to at least get 12 under way. 13 MR. SOFER: Actually, I just thought of something 14 else though, Judge. Our first -- we are at the stage of 15 our presentation, again, obviously always looking to make 16 sure the government doesn't end up paying for the giant 17 problem here. 18 THE COURT: Oh, it will. Not you the government 19 but us the government. 20 MR. SOFER: I understand. But the problem today 21 as it happens is our very first audio tape that we plan to 22 play is the first one that is synced up with the videos 23 that we want to play for the jury and that are coming in 24 and it's going to prejudice our presentation and I would 25 want to play it again. So I think it would, again -- I

think what the problem would be were we to go with the transcript system we're going to miss our ability to present our case the way we wanted to.

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THE COURT: Can't we skip that? I realize it's out of order, but -- just tell the jurors we have a major technological problem that we're trying to address and resolve and we'll keep them posted, please.

MR. SOFER: From my perspective, Your Honor, the government's perspective, I would much prefer that we adjourn to fix the problem and not take that time that we potentially were going to take tomorrow and put it into today. Again, I think the government -- we've looked again at our presentation how long we anticipate it taking, and I don't think -- I, obviously, Your Honor, will decide this, but I think from our standpoint I'd like us to put our best foot forward being an opportunity not to disassemble our case because the -- because of technical problems here. I think I can give The Court some comfort in saying that our case is moving rather quickly.

THE COURT: Let's assume that we're done with Mr. Griffin maybe two weeks from -- by the end of the third week of trial, okay, figure by the time we get through this cross examination and all that, what's your projection in terms of the succeeding witnesses, assume that Mr. Kohlmann, I haven't made my mind up so don't get your

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hopes up at all and don't start crying over to my right.
I'm just saying, but assume Mr. Kohlmann were on for half a
day, what else, in terms of realizing they're going to take
as long to cross examine probably at least as you are to
present. So what do you think, now we're three weeks?
         MR. SOFER:
                      I don't think we have another witness
who comes within even a third or a quarter, frankly, of
Mr. Griffin's testimony in terms of length. In other
words --
          THE COURT: How many more witnesses would you
have?
          MR. SOFER: I think we have approximately -- we
did this last night so I'll look at my colleagues, but I
think about ten more witnesses, ten to 15 at the most.
          THE COURT: So another four weeks probably?
          MR. SOFER: I think many of these witnesses we're
looking at one day of testimony, half a day of testimony
for some of them for the government. Some of them are five
minutes, Judge, eight minutes. It's possible with the
stipulations that, by the way, we still haven't gotten a
response from the defense that we might be able to make
that go faster.
          THE COURT: Let me say this, so then extremely
conservatively probably the government could be done by the
end of May.
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I think extremely conservatively the MR. SOFER: government will be done by the end of May. Of course the audio system and the video system if it does this on a 4 regular basis --Well, I'm inclined to simply adjourn for the day because who knows, sure it may come back five 7 minutes after the jurors are headed home, but I want whoever is going to look at it to look at it. And the 8 9 other thing is I want a back-up system in the building set 10 to go. I don't care what it costs, okay. End of 11 discussion on that. And everything short of myself is starting to deal with the wires. Okay. If you start after 12 13 Memorial Day, what is your -- and if you want to take a few 14 minutes to talk amongst yourselves, again, what do you 15 think at the outside all your witnesses, all your -- all 16 your evidence, double it -- well, probably add a half 17 maximum for government's cross examination because there's 18 fewer of you. 19 We'll try to be judicious. MR. SOFER: 20 THE COURT: I understand. I'm just trying to 21 roughly compute --22 MR. HARTMAN: A fair estimation would be two 23 weeks for us. 24 THE COURT: Us meaning you and Mr. Boss and 25 Mr. El-Hindi or us meaning you from you to Ms. Cleary and

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all --
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 2
               MR. HARTMAN: You, us here, I don't know about
 3
     the federal defenders. You can probably include these guys
 4
     in our two weeks because --
 5
               MR. HELMICK: Judge, three days tops for us.
 6
               THE COURT: So that's three weeks.
 7
               MR. HELMICK: That's three weeks, I'm just
 8
     adding.
 9
               Yeah, I think that's a fairly safe estimate.
10
               MR. HARTMAN: And why we may not even do that.
11
               THE COURT: I understand. I want you to assume
12
    your client's going to testify, everything else you've got,
13
     you know, you're going to be wall to wall everything
14
     imaginable that you might put in how long it would take
15
     basically.
16
               MR. HARTMAN: It would be a lot shorter if you
17
    keep Kohlmann out.
18
               THE COURT: That is not a criteria. What do you
19
     think Mr --
20
               MR. IVEY: We think about two weeks, Your Honor,
21
     for our case.
22
               THE COURT: So we're looking at five weeks, which
23
    means we would still get in hopefully by early July to the
24
     jury. So okay. I don't know how it would change what I'm
25
     about to do. None of that was --
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I don't think the today -- obviously
 1
               MR. SOFER:
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     if this would continue to have problems, but I don't think
 3
     the one day is really going to knock us off our case, Your
 4
     Honor.
               THE COURT:
 5
                           I understand. Well, unless there's
 6
     any objection, I think I'll cool the jury down, tell them
 7
     what the problem is and ask them to return tomorrow morning
     at 8:30. I hate to have them -- I don't know, I just hate
 8
 9
     to have them sitting around.
10
               MR. BOSS:
                          This might give us an opportunity to
     try to work out some stipulations.
11
12
               THE COURT:
                          Oh, it will.
13
               MR. HARTMAN: Judge, should we then plan on going
14
     a full day tomorrow?
15
               THE COURT: Pardon?
16
               MR. HARTMAN: We'll go a full day tomorrow
17
     instead of the half day?
18
               THE COURT:
                          Yeah.
19
               MR. SOFER: And Judge, we do have some other
20
     matters we can deal with this morning here in court.
21
     won't take very long but it will take some of their --
22
               THE COURT:
                           I'm told there's a baseball game down
23
     the street tonight too so maybe we can all go there.
24
               All right. Let's do that. I don't -- in terms
25
     of fairness to the jury I hate to have them sitting around
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hour by hour.

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(Jury brought in.)

THE COURT: Ladies and gentlemen, as I think Amy told you a few minutes ago, we have some serious technical difficulties, namely the system that was working yesterday is not working, and we have no idea. We've been trying for more than half an hour, maybe 45 minutes or even longer to find out what the problem is. The audio apparently works but the projection portion does not, and we're not in a position to proceed until either that is fixed or some alternative arrangement is made. People who may be able to fix it are on their way. They won't be here for another couple hours, and who knows how long it will take to fix it. So in consulting with the lawyers, I think the most sensible thing to do, and I deeply regret this for lots and lots of reasons, is simply to adjourn for the day. I would ask that perhaps late this afternoon you call by 5:00. fully expect we're going to proceed tomorrow morning, and I'd actually hoped to adjourn a little early but I think we better plan on a full day.

I have, among other things, talked to the lawyers about their projection for the time that the case will take. Obviously one day of testimony, one day off isn't going to get us along very quickly, and they are quite confident, and I am, that the time table that I projected

to you during the voir dire, namely getting the case to you in early July looks like a very doable time table. And actually we had talked yesterday because there's still some things that we have to tend to and work out that -- some other matters that I have to resolve with the lawyers. We were actually planning on adjourning tomorrow early to tend to those and give you a bit of a break.

So that's about all I can tell you. It's like the airplane pilot who after the airline's told you the flight's been delayed a little bit and now it's been canceled due to mechanical difficulties and you have to go find yourselves a hotel, at least you don't have that problem. You can all go home, whatever, you can show up to work if you want. I'll leave that entirely up to your judgment. And I regret this, and this was totally unexpected.

So do call late this afternoon, maybe before 4:00. Why don't you call maybe 4:00, 4:30 so at least you are sure to get through and find out. And we will indicate on the recording one way or another whether we will be proceeding. I fully expect to. I mean, I made very clear to the people responsible for this that if it means going out and getting outside vendors to provide whatever it takes, we will do that.

MR. SOFER: Your Honor, may we approach just one

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moment before you let the jury go, please?
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 2
               THE COURT:
                           Sure.
 3
                    (A side bar conference was had on the
 4
                    record.)
 5
               MR. SOFER: I just wanted to ask Your Honor to
 6
    please tell the jury this isn't the government's fault. I
 7
     don't want them to think it's our fault.
                          Whose fault is it? Volunteers?
 8
               THE COURT:
 9
               MR. HARTMAN: I'll take it.
10
               MR. SOFER: Give it to Steve.
                    (A side bar conference was had.)
11
12
               THE COURT:
                          The one thing I did want to mention
13
     too, nobody was monkeying with the equipment. This is the
14
     gremlins coming from outside somewhere. It wasn't as
15
     though any of the lawyers, or trust me, not me, was fussing
16
     with the equipment. It simply happened. And short of
17
     asking you if any of you brought a camera and screwdriver
18
     that we can use on this stuff, I was going to say just
19
     another steel tip to the boot maybe and go to work. We'll
20
     do the best we can and appreciate your patience and good
21
     humor, and unfortunately the Mud Hens don't open until 7:00
2.2
     tonight.
23
               THE JUROR: Can you get us tickets?
24
               THE COURT:
                           I'm going to try to get myself a
25
     ticket. Thank you for your patience, and the low bidder,
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what else can I tell you? Thank you all very much. And especially for your understanding. We'll see -- I hope to see you tomorrow morning at 8:30.

(Jury left the courtroom.)

Mr. Boss and Mr. Sofer, somebody on your side who is able to perhaps explain what sort of systems and requirements technologically you would have, get on the phone with -- start with your supplier and I want simply -- I'm going to go ahead and authorize you to order if they can put something together that would work, what I'd like to have them do, if that's possible, would be to get down here today to set it up and try it. I think what we need are at least the screen for the parties to see and a screen for the jury to see. That's literally jury rigged but I don't think we can do any better than that in terms of a back-up system. So if you can get to work on that, if the others of you can be working on the whatever other issues need addressed between you, I will be available.

Maybe let me know whenever you're ready to proceed with -- whenever you know anything definitive about that, and also about the stipulations or whatever. I have looked at the motions that are pending. Maybe we can address those sometime, and I'm perfectly willing to do whatever we can do today and take as long or as little time

as we need. And we'll go from there. On the weapons, 1 2 those are the firearms in those photos are the ones that 3 were rented out of Clelands. 4 MR. SOFER: They were rented out of Clelands or 5 provided by the government's cooperating witness for 6 shooting. 7 THE COURT: Right, just so you know, my 8 inclination, and this is not to cut you off in regard -- I 9 don't see any reason to introduce the swords, but I do for the firearms. 10 11 MR. SOFER: We can argue the swords. 12 THE COURT: You can argue it. You're just going 13 to show the pictures and say that's what they were and 14 that's it. 15 MR. SOFER: For the swords certainly. The guns I 16 think we'll have in the courtroom, along with some of the 17 very small amount of the other physical evidence like 18 computers, some of the bigger -- we're not putting in 19 pieces of paper generally, but sort of physical items for 20 the most part we will bring in. We certainly -- if The 21 Court has reservations about the swords, for instance, we 22 wouldn't need to bring the swords in. We can put the 23 pictures of the swords. Guns, yes, computers, yes, maybe a

phone here or there, those kinds of items we're likely to

24

25

bring.

THE COURT: Obviously firearms don't go back to 1 2 the jury room. I'd be frightened about that for a number 3 of reasons. We'll see. Okay. What else -- anything else 4 we have to talk about. 5 MR. SOFER: We have two issues that came up 6 yesterday, Judge. We'd like to -- we -- it sort of 7 happened quickly. We haven't talked about this at all, 8 counsel had asked us to move witnesses from the courtroom I guess yesterday or the day before, and we have two -- two 9 10 agents who we've essentially been working with throughout 11 the preparation of the case and Rob --12 THE COURT: Agent Coats and --13 MR. SOFER: And Agent Gubanich, you've seen both 14 of them testify. Given the possible flexibility of the 15 case --16 THE COURT: Counsel, I have no problem with the 17 two case agents attending. It's generally the other 18 witnesses. These guys, if they're going to cheat, they're 19 going to cheat whether they sit here and pick up on it or 20 if they go back to the office. 21 MR. SOFER: They're not going to cheat, Judge. 22 THE COURT: I understand, but given that. 23 MR. BOSS: Judge, it isn't that we would expect 24 them to cheat or not cheat. The ability to listen to 25 another witness' testimony allows that opportunity.

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1
               THE COURT: Let me suggest this to you.
 2
     don't they be excluded when and if one of them is
 3
     testifying.
 4
               MR. SOFER:
                          That's fine, Judge.
 5
               THE COURT: I mean, the video is the video,
 6
     and --
 7
               MR. BOSS: I certainly have no objection about
 8
     them watching the videos. They've certainly seen them a
     number of times. My concern is that certain cross
 9
     examination, and I'm thinking about cross examination
10
11
     primarily of Mr. Griffin, he may say certain responses that
12
     would potentially taylor the testimony of the other
13
     witnesses.
14
               THE COURT: Why don't you --
15
               MR. SOFER: That's always true, Judge. That's
16
     always true when you have a case agent sitting in court
17
     along with the other witnesses.
18
               MR. BOSS: We have no objection to the one case
19
     agent. It's having more than one --
20
               MR. SOFER: And if this was a one-week trial --
21
               THE COURT: I understand. I assume all of
22
     counsel to join in that objection and I'm going to permit
23
     them to attend.
24
               MR. SOFER: The other thing you asked for
25
    yesterday -- I'm sorry, Judge.
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THE COURT: Good ahead. 1 2 MR. SOFER: The other thing --3 THE COURT: Let me say counsel, I'll reconsider 4 if you think there's a particular point at which you would 5 make that request, okay. 6 MR. BOSS: Thank you. 7 THE COURT: And then you can come up and renew it 8 and I'll hear you out. Okay. But as a general rule, I 9 think it's a fair request. Go ahead. 10 MR. SOFER: The other thing Your Honor had asked 11 yesterday and defendant Amawi's counsel had asked for any 12 kind of written agreements. And in fact, we searched and 13 did find something in the nature of an agreement. I want 14 to accept it -- to The Court -- I'd like to give it to Your Honor to take a look at it and make a determination about 15 16 whether The Court believes it's discoverable. 17 THE COURT: Okay. 18 MR. SOFER: That's, I think, from the government, 19 Judge. 20 THE COURT: All right. We'll go to work on the 21 other stuff. And as, hey, if you guys -- if you can get a 22 hold of your -- get going on that. 23 MR. BOSS: We will, Judge. And what I discussed 24 with Mr. Sofer a moment ago was the possibility of the 25 defense teams meeting to try to work out agreed

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stipulations and proposals, and later today we'll try to
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 2
     meet with the government in bunk to hammer things out if we
 3
     can.
 4
               THE COURT:
                           There's a polycom speaker phone in
 5
     the conference room.
 6
               MR. BOSS: I'd like to just have us all sit down
 7
     together if we can.
               MR. SOFER: We'll either sit with them or if we
 8
 9
     can stand or sit in the same room, I mean that facetiously.
10
               THE COURT: You seem to be doing pretty well in
11
    here.
12
               MR. SOFER: We're willing to sit with them, and I
13
     don't know if they're willing to sit with us, but we're
14
     certainly willing to do that. We can do it sometime today.
15
                           Okay. But if it's convenient for any
               THE COURT:
16
     purpose to use the conference room, go ahead. Might find
17
     it helpful just because of the speaker phone. And Amy can
18
     show you how to turn it on and dial whatever the number is
19
     and you can all talk at the same time.
20
               MR. EL-KAMHAWY: Just a little bit of delay with
21
     regards to the motion on the firearms. It is our motion --
22
     it is -- our primary concern is that our client never went
23
     to Clelands, never touched it, never seen it, and how
24
     prejudicial it will be to our client when it's published.
25
                           Yeah, and on the other hand I think
               THE COURT:
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that's always the case whenever there's more than one
 1
 2
     defendant on trial. It's always a risk spilled over, and I
 3
     will make very clear in the instruction, and the evidence
 4
     will show that. It will be self evidence from the
 5
     evidence. I can tell them quite simply whatever
 6
     consideration you give to that evidence cannot enter into
     your deliberations with regard to Mr. El-Hindi.
 7
               MR. SOFER: Well, the problem with that, Judge,
 8
     is that's I don't believe an accurate description of the
 9
10
     law, in a conspiracy case where one is liable --
11
               THE COURT: You're right. I would make clear
12
     that, ladies and gentlemen, there will be no evidence that
13
     Mr. El-Hindi used any of these firearms himself, period,
14
     end of discussion. I think you're right. It's an overt
15
     act alleged in the indictment.
16
               MR. SOFER:
                           It is, Your Honor.
17
               MR. EL-KAMHAWY: Your Honor, respectfully those
18
     firearms are depicted in other pictures and videos that
19
     will be played to the jury particularly, and I will go
20
     along with Mr. Sofer's assumption as what the definition of
21
     the conspiracy and when it's published it kind of rubs on
22
     just sitting there even with the instruction, so --
23
               THE COURT: If I let -- if I let them in at all,
24
     I'll give some sort of instruction if you want.
25
     want to propose one to me, I'll consider it. Okay.
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Anything else?
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                     (A brief discussion was had off the record.)
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 3
                THE COURT: Thank you.
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1	CERTIFICATE			
2				
3	I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript			
4	from the record of proceedings in the above-entitled matter.			
5				
6	S:/ Angela D. Nixon			
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8	Angela D. Nixon, RPR, CRR Date			
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